



Milford-Orange Times

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Editorial: Recognizing Our Role In Milford And Orange

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Until 1822, the Town of Orange was the northern and eastern district of Milford. Although they split almost 200 years ago, in many ways the municipalities remain naturally connected.

That connection has been instrumental to this newspaper's development over the last eight years. Stories that affect Orange usually also have a bearing on Milford as well. Milford, being the larger of the two, is the location of many businesses and services used by Orange residents. Milford and Orange share most of the same state-level politicians.

From the beginning, Milford has unavoidably been part of our territory. In the

Continued on pg 5

Community Calendar Now Online

The Milford-Orange Times has launched a new community calendar on its website. Simply click on "Community Calendar" from the homepage, milford-orangetimes.com.

The calendar will feature events from government, businesses and organizations around Milford and Orange.

Want to avoid conflicts for your organization's next big event? Check out the community events planning calendar that shows all future events. To claim the date and get it on the calendar for others to see, contact groupsupport@burbio.com (or add it to your Burbio calendar if you are already set up).

Index:

Lifestyle	8-11
Obits	19
Op-Ed	4-5
Youth & Ed.....	12
Business	13
Planning Ahead	14
Senior Living.....	15

Orange Raises Tax Exemption For Veterans

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Orange Board of Selectmen voted unanimously with one abstention at its Feb. 13 meeting to raise the income limits for veterans to receive property tax exemptions.

The proposal comes on the heels of a state law passed last year that allows towns to set their own income caps or eliminate them entirely.

The income limit for residents to receive the exemption was raised to \$75,000. Orange previously limited eligibility to individuals earning up to \$60,200 and married couples earning up to \$67,900. Those who qualify can get a tax break of up to \$20,000.

About 150 out of 575 veterans in Orange already qualified for the tax exemption. There was no information available on how many of the remaining veterans in town might benefit from the higher limit.

First Selectman Jim Zeoli said town assessor Mark Branchesi had estimated the town could lose out on approximately \$368,000 in revenue. The town budget approved for the current year is \$69,885,168. Branchesi also estimated the higher exemption level would reduce the grand list by about \$3 million.

"It's a few tenths of one mill," Zeoli said. Several veterans from the town spoke in

favor of the proposal. Orange resident Paul Tarbox, who serves as clerk of the Veterans Affairs Committee in the Connecticut General Assembly and championed raising the limit, argued that the town should eliminate the income restrictions entirely, saying soldiers aren't asked about their

incomes when they sign up to serve.

"When you come home, shouldn't you have that same reflection on those we choose to honor with a thank you on behalf of the community? And we do that through this tax exemption," he said.

Continued on pg 11

Mexican Restaurant Opens In Milford



The band Mariachi Son de mi Terra plays at the Los Cabos restaurant in downtown Milford, with owner Yessica Tujillo-Macary at the mic. See story on page 3. Photo courtesy of Jose Trujillo.

Orange Dog Becomes Instagram Sensation

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

A video of a pet dog from Orange has gone viral on Instagram, garnering over 2.5 million views and an interview on a local network television program.

Twiggy, a rescue dog belonging to Orange resident Stu Crystal, can be seen squealing her lungs out in the clip posted to the social media network by Stu's daughter, Samantha.

Crystal said in an interview with WTNH's CT Style show that Twiggy had just been picked up from the kennel after the family returned from Christmas vacation, and had a lot of pent-up energy.

"She gets very excited in the car," he explained.

The Crystals got Twiggy six years ago from Tennessee through an organization called Shelly's Angels, which secures dogs in states that euthanize strays if they're not quickly adopted.

"She was very skinny, blond with big eyes which inspired her name," Crystal said. "With a few years of TLC a more appropriate name now would be Ashley Graham," he joked.

The video can be seen at [instagram.com/p/BsbVeYflnHh/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BsbVeYflnHh/).



A screengrab from the viral Instagram video featuring Twiggy, owned by the Crystal family in Orange. Contributed video.

Planet Fitness Planned For Milford Plaza

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Planet Fitness has leased a 22,000 square-foot space occupying about half the former ShopRite building in the Milford Plaza on Cherry Street.

ShopRite moved to its current location at 935 Boston Post Rd. in 2016. The plaza contains several other stores, including a Bob's and a Dollar Tree. Planet Fitness already has a location in Milford at 179 Boston Post Rd.

The property is owned by Stonemar Properties, LLC of New York City. The broker of the lease was Charter Realty of Westport. Charter lists Planet Fitness as "coming soon" on its website profile for the plaza.

With Planet Fitness, about 119,300 square feet of the total available 174,996 square feet in the plaza will be occupied.

"If Planet Fitness is coming to replace the previous ShopRite location, that will be good for all the businesses in the plaza," said Nayan Parikh, owner of the UPS Store in the same plaza. "I look forward to better customer traffic. And maybe this will help fill out the vacant spots in the plaza."

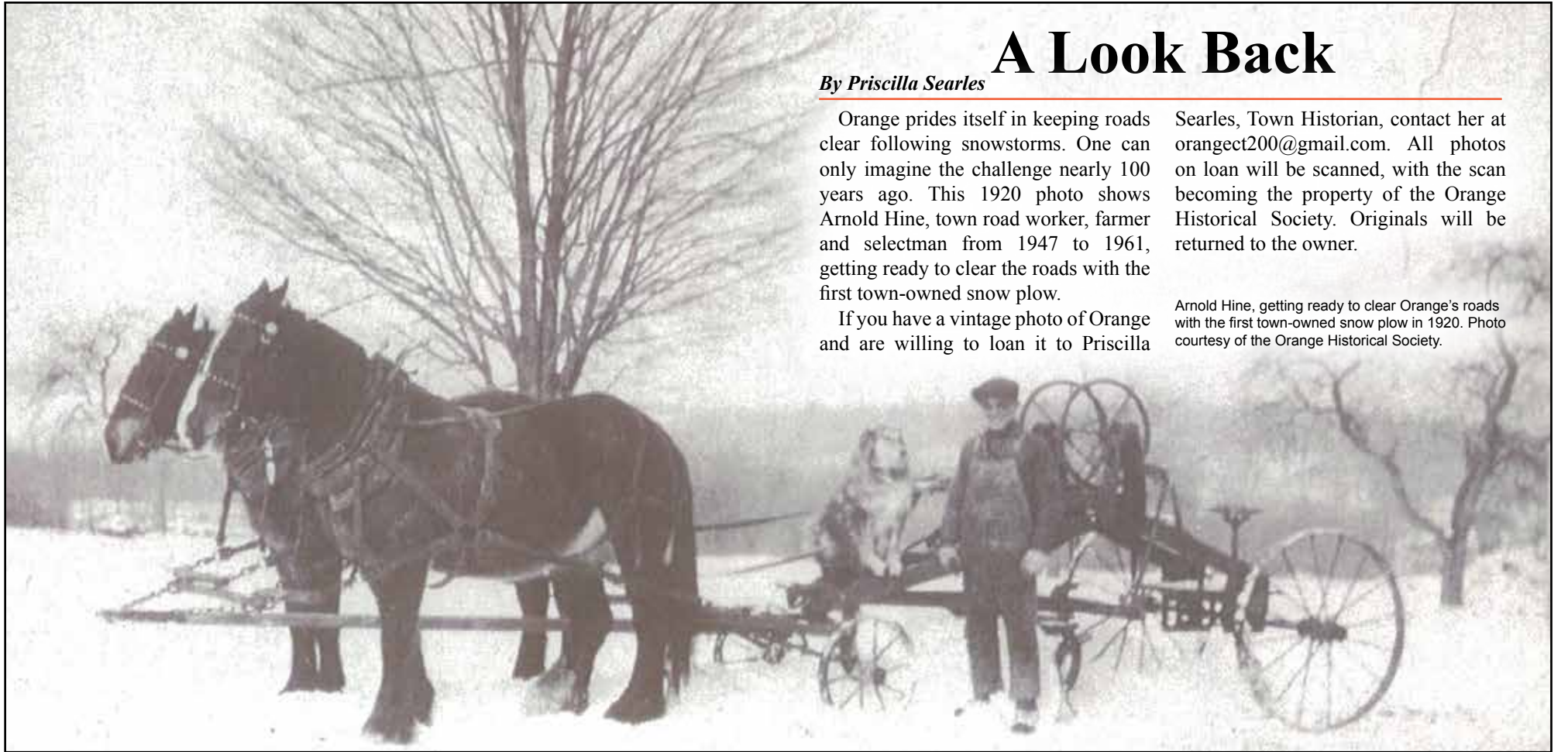
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News & Events



A Look Back

By Priscilla Searles

Orange prides itself in keeping roads clear following snowstorms. One can only imagine the challenge nearly 100 years ago. This 1920 photo shows Arnold Hine, town road worker, farmer and selectman from 1947 to 1961, getting ready to clear the roads with the first town-owned snow plow.

If you have a vintage photo of Orange and are willing to loan it to Priscilla

Searles, Town Historian, contact her at orangect200@gmail.com. All photos on loan will be scanned, with the scan becoming the property of the Orange Historical Society. Originals will be returned to the owner.

Arnold Hine, getting ready to clear Orange's roads with the first town-owned snow plow in 1920. Photo courtesy of the Orange Historical Society.

OVFD Auxiliary Hosting Pancake Supper

The Orange Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary will hold its 10th annual Pancake Supper on Wednesday, March 13 at Chip's Restaurant at 321 Boston Post Rd. in Orange.

The menu includes pancakes, eggs, a choice of bacon or sausage and a beverage. There will be an early seating at 5:30 p.m. and a late seating at 6:30 p.m.

The dinner is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children

10 and under. Gratuity is included. Tickets must be purchased in advance as there are a limited number of seats available. Tickets may be purchased from any Auxiliary member or at Knight's Inc., located at 286 Boston Post Rd. in Orange. All proceeds benefit the OVFD.

For more information, email Lynn@LMK415@yahoo.com or visit orangevfd.com.

Bistro's 'Butternut Buddy' Benefits Beth-El

Bobette's Takeout Bistro in Milford will be sponsoring 'Butternut Buddy' month throughout February to raise funds for the Beth-El Center. Proceeds from the restaurant's butternut soup sales will benefit the Beth-El Center homeless shelter and soup

kitchen on New Haven Avenue in Milford.

Bobette's soup was awarded *Connecticut Magazine's* "Best in Connecticut 2017." The bistro is located at 93 Boston Post Rd. Its website is bobettes.com.

Orange Chiropractor Celebrates 25 Years

Dr. Jeffrey Arnel has been practicing chiropractic in Orange for 25 years this year. He said in a release he has had the pleasure of helping so many people in the community to fix and correct health issues like back pain, neck pain, headaches and sciatica.

"I've always been about improving

people's quality of life with this natural and holistic approach," he said. "I've been able to help people to feel better, heal better and function better."

Arnel Chiropractic is located at 233 Boston Post Rd. in Orange. For more information or to make an appointment, call 203-799-1234.

Indian Market Expanding In Orange

Bharat Bazaar, an international grocery store that specializes in south Asian food, is moving from its current location at 85 Boston Post Rd. in Orange to a significantly larger

space in the same plaza. No information was available at press time about when the new location would be open.

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News & Events

Mexican Restaurant Opens In Milford



Mexican restaurant Los Cabos held a ribbon cutting Jan. 31 to celebrate the opening of its new space in Milford. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Los Cabos, a Mexican Restaurant, held a ribbon-cutting Jan. 31 to celebrate the opening of its new, 46-plus seat space in downtown Milford.

The restaurant at 9 River Rd., owned by brother and sister Yessica Trujillo-Macary and her Jose Trujillo, expands on a take-out restaurant they opened nearby in 2015 called Los Cabos Snack & Go.

“We fought for the American dream and after three years of hard work, money and determination, we’re realizing that dream,”

said Trujillo-Macary. “We live in Milford, we love Milford and want to be an example to young students and dreamers of the possibilities that are right here.”

Trujillo-Macary credits her mother, Maria Trujillo, and grandmother, Coco Liconas, for the salsa, mole sauce and tamales for their recipes.

“We will stay as authentic as possible and will stick to traditional Mexican dishes and our cultural roots,” she said.

Maroney Supports Truck-Only Tolls

State Sen. James Maroney came out in favor of tolling trucks in a Feb. 15 press statement.

“I don’t support tolls for passenger vehicles,” he said. “However, I realize we have significant transportation needs in our state and we must modernize our transportation infrastructure. Depending on what happens with the court case in Rhode Island, I’m willing to support tolls for big rig

trucks.”

Maroney’s position mirrors that of Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont, who campaigned on a platform of only tolling trucks. Rhode Island has implemented truck-only tolls, but that law is being challenged in the courts.

Maroney’s district includes Milford and Orange.

Orange Republicans Holding St. Patrick’s Day Dinner

The Orange Republican Town Committee is sponsoring its annual St. Patrick’s Day Dinner on Monday, March 11 at 6 p.m. at Biagetti’s Restaurant at 77 Campbell Ave. in West Haven.

There will be a complete Irish dinner with corned beef and cabbage and all that goes with it. A cash bar is available and

door prizes will be plentiful. Attendees are encouraged to wear green.

Tickets are \$42 per person and reservations must be made in advance by March 4. Checks can be made out to the ORTC and mailed to P.O. Box 632, Orange CT 06477. For questions and/or reservations, call 203-974-2938.

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Opinion & Editorial

Residents Still Oppose Tolls



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

Tolls continue to be a major issue at the Capitol. Starting last legislative session, the majority party Democrats sparked a conversation about reinstating tolls in Connecticut, but with close majorities, it never got rolling.

Now, legislative Democrats have taken bigger leads in the House and Senate and with Gov. Ned Lamont the tolls conversation is gaining speed.

Lamont expressed support for tolling trucks – a proposal that is currently being challenged by the trucking industry in our neighboring state of Rhode Island. And recently Lamont’s budget chief said they will wait to hear the thoughts of the Department of Transportation before backing a proposal.

The last study released by the DOT called for 82 tolls throughout the state. If this study is implemented it could cost Connecticut commuters anywhere between \$500 and \$1,200 a year.

I recently sent out a poll by email and on Facebook to ask residents if they would support a plan to place 82 tolls throughout Connecticut. Respondents overwhelmingly rejected such a proposal – 88.8 percent said no, 8.5 percent said yes, and 2.7 percent were undecided.

A majority of the people said in their comments they were totally against tolls, and some said they would like to see them at the borders. Border tolls are not allowed in Connecticut due to federal regulations.

Despite the fact that a majority of Democratic lawmakers favor tolls, we can work together to stop them. I encourage residents to contact their lawmakers and tell them to vote no on tolls. The more people speak up, the more our voices can be heard.

If you didn’t get a chance to take my poll, visit RepFerraro.com. To stay in the know about tolls, sign up at cthousegop.com/tolls.

Tax And Spend



STATE REP. (R-114)
THEMIS KLARIDES

The average feedback my office and caucus members receive is usually regarding the serious need for elected officials to make Connecticut affordable.

During a time when we have seen more and more people leave the state and take their money with them, we should not double down on taxing our existing residents. We can’t lose any more people; we have to stop taxing people out of the state.

Unfortunately, this message is lost on many legislators, given the discussions about increasing the sales tax, medication tax, statewide property tax, school regionalization, state-funded child care, free college, payroll tax and the possibility of tolls. All these are proposed to be implemented in the next year or two. This would obliterate the people of Connecticut as we continue to see people move away.

That is why I am fighting every new tax and tax increase being proposed. This past week I testified against SB 475, a bill put forward by Democrats to increase the sales tax. The people of the 114th District and throughout Connecticut cannot afford any more tax increases or new taxes.

It was said that “this bill would give government more access to revenue” but, to put it plainly, it’s more access to people’s wallets. I made it clear in my testimony: this is state government directly passing the burden onto taxpayers. It will have a negative impact to people on a fixed income or who live paycheck to paycheck. SB 475 is receiving broad support from House and Senate Democrats and strong opposition from me and fellow Republicans.

When people contact me and other members in my caucus, we listen, we hear you and we are fighting for you. There are many bills that have been introduced that will bring a devastating blow to the wellbeing of Connecticut residents.

I am always encouraged when I hear from the people of the 114th District, but I would like to make a request: Please reach out more. Not just to my office, but to the offices of the legislators who are in favor of these shortsighted proposals and bills. Your voice and testimony make an enormous impact, and we want to hear from you.

The governor on Feb. 20 introduced his budget. It includes new taxes and measures that will financially strain our communities. I will fight to make sure your voices are heard.

New Bills Submitted For The Session



STATE REP. (D-118)
KIM ROSE

The legislature has been in session for a little more than a month, and I have been busy meeting with constituents, other legislators and preparing proposed bills.

This year a few of the bills I am excited to introduce and cosponsor encompass environmental issues as well as protecting homeowners and animals.

HB 6011: An Acts Regulating the Transition from Plastic, Single-Use Carryout Bags to Reusable Bags.

There are a number of bills in front of the Environmental Committee addressing how we as a state can eliminate the use of plastic and commit to reusable bags. Several Connecticut communities have already transitioned successfully, serving as templates for a statewide ban. This proposed legislation will be fair to retailers and ensure a cleaner future. I am proud to join several of my colleagues as a cosponsor on this bill.

“Necessity is the mother of invention.” This is true for understanding problems within our state and identifying the legislative solutions. This session I have also introduced HB 5425: An Act Requiring that Registered Home Improvement Contractors Maintain Liability Insurance.

It was several years ago I personally experienced a home remodeling nightmare at the hands of a contractor. After more than \$25,000 in damage was done to my home, I discovered there is very little to protect the homeowner. Stories like mine are all too common. I am proud to have the support of trade organizations such as the Connecticut Home Builders Association, the Connecticut Builders Association, the Remodelers Council and a number of independent home contractors. This bill not only protects the homeowner – it also serves as a safeguard for the contractor.

HB 5399: An Act Concerning the Definition of Kennel for Purposes of Commercial Kennel Regulation.

Not long after Public Act No. 13-23 became law, we learned the definition of kennel under this statute made the legislation unenforceable. As a result, I have introduced this new bill to clarify the definition of “kennel” and achieve the result we originally desired. People are offering the services of a kennel in their homes, but they are not licensed or inspected. This leaves pets vulnerable to communicable diseases. In addition, there are safety issues that are not addressed, and local zoning regulations are not followed. We are simply asking those who board dogs to become licensed. It’s a health and safety issue for our pets.

Working To Save You From More Taxes



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

In the first month-and-a-half of the session, I’ve noticed that many pieces of legislation going through the pipeline seem to take direct aim at your family checkbook.

I want to emphasize that I will never put a party before what is right for my district.

There is a bill to increase the state sales tax. A bill has been filed to increase the sales tax rate to 6.85 percent. Senate Bill 475 would levy a 0.5 percentage-point tax increase collected by the state and promised to be returned to the municipalities.

Additionally, there is a proposal which includes a new statewide tax on real estate on top of local property taxes (Senate Bill No. 431). The bill is being marketed as a way to change the state’s car tax structure but would result in higher property taxes for many. The bill includes provisions to reduce certain assessed property values in towns and cities, thereby forcing municipalities to increase mill rates and leading to higher property taxes on everyone.

My concern with the state promising Milford and Orange tax dollars collected by the state is that the state has a history of not reimbursing the towns fully. That is what happened with 2015 legislation. One percent of the sales tax revenue was dedicated to support municipal aid and the Special Transportation Fund and never reached the promised city or town.

Another tax proposal coming out of the Environment committee would allow any municipality to impose a buyer’s fee on the conveyance of real property up to 1 percent of the consideration paid by the buyer in excess of \$150,000.

This proposal troubles me greatly, especially because so many home buyers are already struggling to save money for closing costs. Any additional financial burden shifted onto them may make the dream of homeownership more difficult, if not impossible.

Other proposals, such as a proposed grocery tax on food and medication which would devastate a family budget or the possibility of tolls on our state highways, will only add to the growing list of fees and taxes coming out of your wallet.

I commit to spend the legislative session finding ways in which we can provide incentives for people to live, work and retire in Connecticut, not punish hard-working taxpayers.

The current overtaxation of our residents will not be sustainable. We will not sustain, nor remain. We can fix this, but we must do it together and not be divided by a letter next to our names.

As always, if you have questions about our state government, please contact me by phone at 1-800-842-1423 or by email at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov.



Milford-Orange Times

Stephen Hechtman, Publisher: publisher@theorangetimes.com
Patricia Miller, Entertainment Editor: patmiller605@sbcglobal.net
Brandon T. Bisceglia, Editor: editorinchief@theorangetimes.com
Creative Director: Wendy Macomber Photographers: Steve Cooper • Lexi Crocco

In The House:

Rep. Themis Klarides (R-114) Rep. Charles Ferraro (R-117)
Rep. Kim Rose (D-118) Kathy Kennedy (R-119)

Senator’s Seat: Sen. James Maroney

Columnists:

Ellen Beatty, Around Milford	Barbara Lehrer, Real Estate	Carol Smullen, Orange Chamber
Benjamin Blake, Milford Mayor	Annamarie Mastrangelo, Flooring	Raymond Spaziani, Wine
Joanne Byrne, Retirement	Marianne Miller, Lions Club	Pam Staneski, Milford Chamber
Cynthia V. Catapano, Local Wildlife	Amir Mohammad, MD, MPH, Health	Hon. Beverly K. Streit-Kefalas, Probate
David Crow, Conversations	Ken Oakes, Tech	Eric Tashlein, Finances
Pat Dray, Gardening	Karen Panzer, Travel	Fern Tausig, Hypnosis
Peter Hechtman, Books	Trish Pearson, Insurance	Roger Tausig, Rotary Club
Thomas P. Hurley, Veteran’s Corner	Tedra Schneider, Interior Design	Michele Tenney, Health
Shaileen Landsberg, Profiles	Priscilla Searless, Town Historian	Trish O’Leary Treat, Profiles

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Phone: 203.799.7500 Online: www.milford-orangetimes.com
Facebook: @theorangetimes Instagram: @theorangetimes Twitter: @OrangeTimesCT

We Regret The Error



Peter Erodici

In a story on page 1 in the Jan. 31 edition about the annual awards for the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce, the incorrect photo was used for Peter Erodici, who is Milford’s Finance Director.

In a story on page 13 in the Jan 31 edition about the grand opening of the Jordan Kindel Salon in Milford, the photo was credited to the incorrect person. The photo was taken by Robert Creigh.

Opinion & Editorial

Milford And Orange Better Together

By Benjamin Blake

It is an honor to be asked to contribute to this first edition of the *Milford-Orange Times*.

Although this publication has been around for several years as *The Orange Times*, it was scoured by Milford readers as well as by the residents of Orange and the surrounding towns.

The change of the periodical's name seems appropriate, as the close ties between the city of Milford and the town of Orange have been deep and long-lasting. We share parks, teams, resources, community services, committees, dog wardens and attitudes. Milford and Orange also have a shared history; bartered for in 1639 by Peter Prudden, Orange and Milford were one entity until 1822 when Orange found its own identity.

It is especially gratifying to contribute to this periodical, as the dwindling number of actual newspapers threatens our established way of deriving information – whether it be local politics, opinions, columnists, editorials, social events, awards or advertising. Some of us still like the feel of an old-fashioned newspaper in hand, and are glad to step away from the computer or screen to glean what's happening in our communities.

So whether you support selectmen or an alderman, I am genuinely delighted to contribute this brief note to the newly-titled *Milford-Orange Times* and look forward to reading about a full array of articles and opinions.

Our Role In Milford And Orange. Continued from page 1.

last few years, we've turned that incidental coverage into a conscious effort. And as our coverage has grown, so has our Milford-based readership. Roughly half our circulation of 12,000 lives in Milford now.

It was long past time that our name more accurately reflected what we do. So starting this issue, *The Orange Times* has become the *Milford-Orange Times*.

Orange will, of course, always be our home. That is where the publication was born and where it still resides. We don't expect our coverage of Orange government, business and events to change.

We do plan to double down on our coverage of Milford. Though we have reported regularly on the Milford community over the past few years, we also recognize that there are opportunities to increase our focus on the city.

One of the first steps we've taken is to invite Milford Mayor Benjamin Blake to write a column. No one knows the inner working of the city better than its top elected official. We're pleased to have him on board. You can read his inaugural column in this issue on page 5.

We also have Milford alder Ellen Russell Beatty writing about things going on around the city.

We have also been in conversations with others from the Milford community in an effort to bring more diverse voices to the table. You will begin to see some of their contributions in the coming issues.

Even as we recognize our connections to

Milford, we are continually working to bring more voices from Orange to our readers. Recently, for instance, we've added Dr. Amir Mohammad, Orange's Director of Public Health, to our roster of columnists. Thomas P. Hurley, Senior Vice Commander of the American Legion Post 127 in Orange will be giving representation to the town's veterans. And Carol Smullen, Executive Director of the Orange Chamber of Commerce, will be providing updates on some activities in the business community.

Smullen will be joined by her counterpart in Milford, Pam Staneski – someone long-time readers should already be familiar with from the columns she wrote as a state representative.

We have also added to our website a community calendar that will feature events from both Milford and Orange. We hope organizations from throughout the area will find it a convenient place to list their events – and that readers will use it to get out there and see some of the many events happening in both municipalities. Simply click on the "Community Calendar" link on our homepage to see it and add your own events.

As we enter this new era, it is more vital than ever that we hear from you, the readers. We want to hear what you think we're doing well and what you think we could be doing better. We welcome your ideas for stories, your letters and your insights. This is your community newspaper. Help us make it even more relevant to your needs in the coming months and years.

Regionalization Not Ready For Cases Like Amity

By Thomas P. Hurley

State Senate Bill 454, now with the Senate Education Committee, could result in the Amity Region 5 School District being dissolved. Let us look at what would need to happen to implement this bill and avoid splitting up the district.

In order to prevent the very real chance of an Amity breakup if this bill passes as currently written, the Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge and Amity districts would have to become an exempted K-12 regional district.

This is a decision the associated towns' and Amity officials have looked at but so far rejected. Local control is an important thing that would be lost in a regionalization of the elementary schools. Bethany is the most likely to approve such a change if the other towns' elementary schools are included in the district, as a significant overhead reduction to the town budget for the superintendent and staff could be realized.

Amity Region 5 is not designed to meet the current needs of the elementary systems (even though substantial BOWA cooperation within the four districts has been accelerated in the last few years). Amity would incur additional staffing requirements in order to move the BOWA districts to a K-12 regional district to make up for any shortfalls in elementary school administration. This would be an offset to any savings generated by the consolidation.

The BOWA towns would have to approve any structural changes to incorporate

the elementary schools by vote of the residents, and all three towns would have to individually approve changing the district structure to include the elementary schools.

This is a time-consuming project. With the deadlines in SB 454, work would have to begin soon on a district exploratory committee. This would have to be done fast enough to meet the legislation's requirement that regionalization "become effective state-wide for the school year commencing July 1, 2021, if such plan has not been approved by the General Assembly and signed into law on or before July 1, 2020."

BOWA towns typically spend over 60 percent of their budgets on their school systems. A little less than half of that is spent on the elementary schools in BOWA towns. So full regionalization would have a major impact on local officials' control over education expenditures and local property taxes.

School district vendor contracts and IT software consolidations are also a problem that will need to be addressed. They aren't mentioned in SB 454.

Senate Bill 454 would lead us into new uncharted territory regarding efficiencies, controls and mechanisms for implementation. It does not meet its intended purpose as written and should be sent back to the drawing board for more districts' input. Let your legislators know your feelings on this matter and ask them to reject the bill.

Thomas P. Hurley is a past Amity Region 5 board chair.

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Rotary Programs To Broaden Your Horizons

By Roger Tausig



When I took over as president of the Rotary Club of Orange on July 1, I took the reins of a club that was vital and active. Yet as with all things, there is always room for improvement.

At the intensive Rotary training course I attended prior to taking over, I learned that Rotary clubs across the country were facing challenges in certain areas and that several changes were in order. One area I observed could stand some shoring up was our weekly meeting programs.

Having a vibrant club that is able to deliver on our mission of community service starts

with cohesion and fellowship. Our weekly meeting is the place where these qualities are built. Attendance at our meetings was crucial to building the comradery that is necessary to be successful and vibrant.

How could I encourage attendance? The answer was clear: seek out guest speakers from a broad spectrum of eclectic topics about which members would be interested in hearing. Here are just some of the programs we have already had and the upcoming ones that are scheduled.

The United Nations in Action: Orange Rotarian Margaret Novicki had an outstanding career working for the United Nations in several countries on the African continent. Novicki shared the story of her part in the successful efforts by UN Peacekeepers to end

the civil war in Liberia that raged for many years. It was a riveting presentation that revealed the extraordinary role she and her colleagues played in navigating the complex factional conflicts causing the violence there.

The Opioid Crisis: One of the newest members, Dr. Amir Mohammad, is the health director for the Town of Orange. He will be speaking to the club about the opioid crisis and the effect it has, not only on the afflicted individuals and their families, but on our communities, businesses and healthcare systems. It promises to be an informative and eye-opening presentation.

The Happiness Club: In this fast-paced world, we all experience some degree of anxiety and stress which, whether we know it or not, causes many of us to feel less happy

than we could. Happiness Club founder Lionel Ketchian will share his insights on how to find the happiness that we all want, but don't know the keys to achieving. Ketchian is a gifted speaker with an upbeat attitude. He will share his wisdom on the things we all can do to increase our level of happiness and improve our lives in the process.

We have more programs scheduled that will provide equally interesting knowledge on a variety of subjects including alternative health modalities, coin collecting, music therapy for people suffering from dementia and more.

Please feel free to contact me at rogetausig@yahoo.com or 203-605-5151 if you would like to attend a meeting, learn more about Rotary, or hear firsthand what these speakers have to offer.

Veteran's Corner:

Goings On With Orange Veterans

I hope to answer a few questions and stimulate some of our readers to ask some new ones.

As a member of American Legion Post 127 in Orange, I'd like to highlight some of the goings on we come across at our weekly social nights. Dinner is on Wednesday nights for veterans, friends and family, or anyone else who would like to socialize at the Legion located at 630 Grassy Hill Rd.

The latest is a revised veteran's tax exemption ordinance that was passed by the Orange Board of selectmen Feb. 13, expanding the pool of qualified veterans by increasing the income limit to \$75,000.



THOMAS P. HURLEY

It also caps the exemption at \$20,000 of the assessed value of the eligible veteran's property.

Further clarification of the amended section of the code of the Town of Orange can be found in Chapter 350: Taxation – Article VIII Additional Property Tax Exemption for Veterans, Section 350-29-33.

There is another opportunity for veterans – or anyone else – to volunteer and spend some time helping out at the VA with Bingo for the Blind.

The Legion has a volunteer honors rifle team that participates at the grave site of veterans in Orange.

Regionalization Proposal Raises Questions For Orange

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

School regionalization is on the minds of lawmakers and residents across Connecticut this year. But in Orange, some fear the imminent breakup of the current regionalization structure.

A proposal before the state legislature would mandate the regionalization of school districts across the state based on the current probate judge map. Senate Bill 454 was submitted by Democratic state Sen. President Pro Tempore Martin Looney and referred Jan. 24 to the Education Committee.

The bill requires municipalities with fewer than 40,000 residents to regionalize with a neighboring district. It would apply to most of the state's 169 towns – only 24 have populations above the threshold.

Orange operates under a partial regionalization model. Amity Regional School District #5 brings the towns of Orange, Bethany and Woodbridge together for grades 7 through 12. But the elementary schools are locally controlled.

Because the districts aren't fully regionalized, Orange could theoretically fall under SB 454's mandate. The problem is that the probate map places Orange with Milford, not Bethany or Woodbridge. In fact, all three towns would fall into separate jurisdictions. Woodbridge would be merged with Ansonia, Derby, and Seymour; and Bethany would be merged with Hamden.

Area Republicans were quick to shoot the proposal down. In a press release, House Republican Minority Leader Themis Klarides, whose district includes parts of Orange, called the proposal completely misguided.

"If you look at the current probate map, there will be students from around the state with impossible commute times to school," Klarides said. "This plan doesn't make sense.

Left as is, the plan will break apart already regionalized school districts like Amity for example, which is made up of Woodbridge, Bethany and Orange. I believe that we should put our trust in the towns to decide what is best for their communities and schools."

"This proposal would penalize a school district that already regionalizes," said Rep. Charles Ferraro, whose district includes Orange. "I haven't heard from local officials who believe that this is a good idea. You would think Democrat lawmakers would consult with their boards of education, first selectmen, and mayors before proposing something so ridiculous."

"Amity Regional is an educational success story, we should hail, not eliminate. I will fight to defeat any bill which looks to end Amity current regional district," said Rep. Kathy Kennedy, an Amity alum.

But state Sen. James Maroney, a Democrat whose district covers Milford and Orange, promised that the Amity Regional School District would not be broken up under the final version of any regionalization legislation.

"The Amity School District is excelling and is a prime example of the success that responsible regionalization can deliver," Maroney said. "My colleagues and I are cognizant of the ramifications of breaking up districts, which are working well, can have on our state. As this legislative session continues, my colleagues and I will monitor the regionalization bills and their possible impact. We are in no way looking to break up successful districts, as that would be counterproductive to our state and the people of the 14th (state Senate) district."

The bill is linked to a larger effort under Connecticut's new governor, New Lamont, to save money by regionalizing various services wherever possible. Connecticut

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- To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
- To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

Technology:

Microsoft Will Never Call You

In the past few years, there have been computer-related scams that have gotten out of control. Criminals have been stealing tens of millions of dollars from senior citizens and others.

Cyber criminals are calling people on the telephone and claiming to be from Microsoft support. They claim that the victim's computer contacted their security servers and that there are hackers or a virus that needs to be removed. If you don't remove them, the scammers say, they will have to turn off your computer, services and internet and hold you responsible for damages. At this point they offer to fix your computer remotely for a premium fee



KEN OAKES

via legitimate remote access software like LogMeIn Rescue.

In addition to telephone calls, the criminals use emails, pop-ups, and other online marketing tools to try and trick you into believing this is real.

Once these people are on your computer, they are talking to you on the phone while they have control of your mouse and keyboard. They proceed to show you evidence of "problems" and evidence of "hackers" or other malicious activity. Here is the clever part: they are actually showing you normal logs and trivial technical information that is a normal part of Windows. It is an elaborate ruse.

Cybercriminals use fear to coerce victims to pay by credit card for extremely high-priced, low-quality support services that use legitimate credit card merchants to process payments.

These "companies" are typically overseas, originating from sketchy places like India or Africa. They close and reopen with different names faster than authorities can get to them.

Subsequently, they will ask for a large sum of money for a support contract. This can be anywhere from \$200 to \$1,000 or more depending on how bold they are.

So if you get a phone call from somebody that says they are from Microsoft, just hang up. Microsoft will not call you.

If you get an email says "Your computer has contacted us. Please call this number. You have hackers on your computer," just delete

the email.

If you're surfing the web and there's a pop-up that says "Warning, Alert, Call this number," it is all a lie.

If you believe you or a friend has been a victim of this crime, contact your credit card company and report the transaction as fraud. If you believe your computer has been compromised, have it cleaned and protected by a qualified, legitimate computer service company.

Ken Oakes is a computer technology consultant from New Haven County. He has lived in the area his whole life aside from eight years in the United States Army. He provides services for local businesses, residences and professionals. Contact Oakes at 203-444-3432.

Getting To Know You:

A Reverse Resolution

I suspect that many of you began 2019 with New Year's resolutions. I also suspect that as January rolled into February many of your resolutions went the way of the dinosaur. For those of you who have managed to keep your resolutions, I will pause here so you may give yourselves a well-deserved pat on the back.

New Year's resolutions stressed me out until this year. Every year I'd put thought into them. I'd make them with the intention of keeping them. I'd struggle to keep them. And then, inevitably it seems, they would wind up on the scrap heap. I suppose they could accurately be described as a list of personal failings.

I once resolved to never make another New Year's resolution, only to fail by making resolutions the next year. No matter how I tried, I always seem to come up short.

This year someone set me straight. My father has a shed in his back yard, and every winter he has his family and friends out to



DAVID CROW

the shed just before the New Year. There we feast and imbibe and discuss politics, personal improvement and the meaning of life while we cheat each other at Hearts and Set-Back and tell whoppers about hunting and fishing.

At the 2018 gathering, one of my father's friends, a retired plastic surgeon named Sergio who lives next door with his wife and a sizable herd of cats, brought up New Year's resolutions as we drank some of his homemade wine. I told him they stressed me out and I didn't think I'd make any for 2019.

"I'll bet you're making resolutions the wrong way," Sergio told me as he poured himself a second glass of wine. I gave him a quizzical look and held out my glass for more wine.

"Oh, sure," continued Sergio. "I bet your past resolutions were all about swearing something off or denying yourself something or changing something about

yourself. Am I right?"

After a thoughtful sip of wine, I admitted Sergio was right.

"See, there is your problem right there," he smiled. "Your resolutions are all focused on things you don't like about yourself. They're all negative. When it comes to resolutions you've got to focus on the positive."

Sergio chuckled before he continued. "Think it through. For example, if you resolve to stop eating sweets, then every time you eat a sweet you've lost the resolution. Instead, turn it around. Resolve to eat more of something good for you, like salad, and then every time you eat a salad you've kept the resolution and you'll feel better about yourself. See?"

After another sip of wine, I said that sounded pretty good.

"You should resolve to enjoy more of the good things that you already do," Sergio added. "Resolve to hold your wife's hand while you take walks together. Resolve to read one more book than you did last year. Resolve to spend more time on your friends

and family. Resolve to give a few bucks to charity. Resolve to sit quietly with your cat in your lap and reflect on the best thing that happened to you that day. Resolve to do more of the things that make you proud of and happy with yourself. If you make resolutions like that then you can't miss."

I don't know if it was the wine, but what Sergio said seemed to make a lot of sense. So I tried it. I have to say it's working as well Sergio said it would.

In fact, I invite you to try the Sergio method of making resolutions. What have you got to lose?

Until next time, y'all come out.

David Crow lives in Orange with his wife and three children. He practices law and he asks everyone to call him "Dave." Only his mother and his wife call him "David," and only when they're mad at him. You can contact Dave at Sit.a.Spell.and.Visit@gmail.com. He'll always find a half hour for a good chat.

The Book Club:

To Make Oneself Anew

Tara Westover, *Educated*, Random House, 2018

Reader, I defy you to finish this book without having your face turn purple from rage. The author/heroine describes growing up in a family that has heaped upon her mountains of abuse.

The father might best be described as a religious fanatic/survivalist of the kind who stores away 10 years-worth of food and ammo against the coming of the apocalypse and then turns the TV off in disappointment when Y2K

fails to deliver it. His complete distrust in government means that no one who is sick gets to see a "socialist" doctor, nor do his children get to go to school and experience "socialist" brainwashing. Any attempt at grooming by his daughters is met with the accusation that they are whores.

But it gets worse. Papa Westover, who is in the construction and salvage businesses, is either ignorant of – or indifferent to – the basic rules of safety. Example: you don't take a blow torch to the fuel tank of a car unless it has been emptied. All of his children, and he,



PETER HECHTMAN

himself, bear the scars, stumps, concussions and disfigurements of such indifference.

It gets still worse. The darkest and dirtiest of family secrets is a brother who is a violent sadist whose siblings live in fear because the parents live in

denial. This is where Tara Westover comes from, but it will not be where she remains. You don't get on the bestseller list unless you triumph over adversity. We Americans are addicted to Horatio Alger stories.

Her break begins at Brigham Young University. Her description of the unfolding of her life from this point is particularly illuminating because she gives us

not merely pivotal events in her separation from her family, but also reconstructs the manner in which she digests

and analyzes these episodes. As you can anticipate, her journey is filled with many doubts as to whether she belongs in a university. Is she too stupid, too naive, too crude, too slovenly, too lower class, too devout?

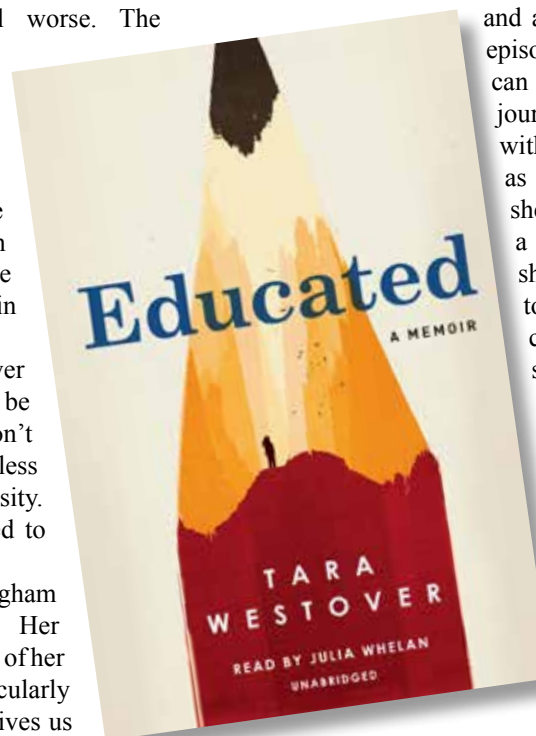
The process of dissociating oneself from family and upbringing is painful. At the end

it can leave one bereft and abandoned. Many who fail at this task are simply reverting to what is comfortable and familiar.

Professors are impressed with Westover. She shows a knack for historical research and writing that belie her unschooled youth. She wins fellowships to Cambridge University and then to Harvard with academically powerful professors promoting her career. Ten years from entering BYU, she is awarded a PhD in history.

Does all this mean a final break with her family? Or at least a mellowing of their relations? Far from it. What the memoir conveys is that the process of breaking from such a monomaniacal family is not a simple linear progression toward the light. It is filled with twists and turns, episodes of guilt, remorse and backsliding. She longs for their love and approval but what is always at stake is the price that must be paid to obtain it.

Peter Hechtman is the founder and owner of The Book Maven. Peter can be reached at thebookmaven@sympatico.ca.



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Lifestyle

On Your Mind:

Irritable, Angry, Sad Or Depressed?

There are so many different ways to label negative feelings. Each has a different definition that evokes a unique way of experiencing it in the mind and body. Every emotion has a corresponding physical expression that includes, but is not limited to, elevated blood pressure, stomach pain, neck and back pain or headaches.

Because of the mind/body connection, the physical stress on the body caused by negative feelings can have long-range and lasting health consequences. You don't have to be a victim of your own feelings.

NPR reported in a Feb. 4 story titled "If You're Often Angry Or Irritable, You May Be Depressed," that scientists are finding a connection between irritability, anger and depression. They have made a connection that opens the possibility of another way to use medication for people who didn't realize their anger and irritability could be depression.

I have successfully worked with many

clients who have unresolved anger from childhood experiences. That anger affects every aspect of their lives. They definitely feel depressed as a result of holding on to those negative feelings for so long.

Angry people often lash out at those around them, making them appear to be irritated. I am not a mental health doctor, but I'm not seeing the "new" connection between these negative emotions.

Hypnosis, meridian tapping and neuro-linguistic programming are all tools that I use to alleviate negative feelings of all kinds. Although medication can benefit people who suffer from a variety emotional health issues, there are also several alternatives that can be used effectively to get the desired results without committing to a medical remedy. The side effects of medication can sometimes be



FERN TAUSIG

very severe. Why not be open to see if other modalities can help? Medication remains an option if other avenues fail?

There is extensive research documenting positive results supporting hypnosis and meridian tapping for learning to cope with and resolve deep emotional negative feelings.

I have professional relationships with many medical doctors who refer their patients to me as a first choice to deal with unresolved emotions. Hypnosis is widely used and respected in the medical community, but there are still so many who are uninformed about options for alternative help and therefore suffer needlessly.

Hypnosis can empower you to understand the root cause of unwanted negative feelings and teach you to reframe your thoughts to

neutralize those feelings.

I recently worked with someone who has a stressful job and felt anxious every day at work. The feelings were related to her childhood experiences but were exacerbated by her boss. We were able to resolve those issues from the past, which neutralized the effect her job had on her life. It didn't change the situation, but it changed the way it affected her. Her stress was reduced to a manageable level and she was able to function at work comfortably.

Negative feelings are normal, but they don't have to define your life or your relationships. Take control of thoughts that create feelings that dictate your behaviors. You can take back control of your life. All the resources you need to feel better are already inside of you.

Fern is a certified hypnotist, lifecoach and health educator. She can be reached at www.myhealinghypnosis.com.

Travel Matters

Best Cruise Destinations For 2019

It's a big world out there, but wherever you want to go in 2019, there's a cruise ship standing by ready to take you.

Over the course of the year, 30 million travelers will take to the seas on almost 300 cruise ships, including no fewer than 24 brand-new ships sailing for the first time. The ships range in size from 100 passengers on Celebrity Flora in the Galapagos to 6,000 on Symphony of the Seas, Royal Caribbean's latest and biggest cruise ship.

More than a third of sailings will be in the warm waters of the Caribbean, and more than 28 percent will sail the Mediterranean and other European destinations, according to the Cruise Lines International Association's 2019 Cruise Industry Trends and Outlook report. China, Australia and New Zealand, and Alaska will have almost 5 percent each. The rest are more exotic destinations such as the Galapagos, Antarctica and the

South Pacific.

Alaska is popular with intergenerational groups, partly due to reduced pricing on Alaskan voyages. More ships are serving this destination in 2019. Cunard and Viking Ocean offer Alaskan destinations for the first time this year, for example. For many, Alaska is a first-time cruise destination because it's the best way to see cities like Skagway, Juneau and Ketchikan – unless you are satisfied with aerial views from a private plane or helicopter. Princess Cruises celebrates 50 years in Alaska this year.

Mediterranean cruises are tops for people who have not been to Europe and who want to see many countries all in one trip. You only need to unpack once. The



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

eastern Mediterranean, especially Greece, is very strong for 2019, and northern Europe, the U.K. east to the Baltic, has become popular as well. More competitive pricing and more diverse itineraries seem to be the major factors.

Cruising out of New York City right in our backyard has never been so popular. Royal Caribbean moved Oasis of the Seas into Cape Liberty, right across the river in New Jersey. A "revolutionized" Celebrity Summit sails to Bermuda out of Cape Liberty. And Norwegian offers sailings to Bermuda, Florida and the Caribbean 52 weeks a year out of New York City, including sailings next winter on their newest ship, Norwegian Bliss.

The Caribbean is always a favorite for younger travelers and multigenerational

groups. The ships and the pricing can't be beat. Royal Caribbean, Norwegian, Celebrity and Carnival will put their brand-new ships in the Caribbean – sometimes moving them to Europe for the summer season, as is done with the Celebrity Edge. Travel to the Caribbean is available from a number of ports, including New York, Boston, Miami, New Orleans, Charleston, Galveston, Tampa, Port Canaveral and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

On the horizon for 2020, Virgin Voyages (the adults-only cruise line by Richard Branson) is offering "Rock Star Suites" and the first tattoo parlor at sea. Ritz Carlton Yacht Club is offering luxury sailing for families of all ages.

Karen Quinn-Panzer is the owner of Dream Vacations Quinn Panzer Travel. She can be reached at kpanzer@dreamvacations.com

The Garden Spot:

What's The Word About Round Up?

You may have read recently that a multimillion-dollar lawsuit in California ruled that Bayer's Round Up caused non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in a groundskeeper. Bayer is, as expected, appealing the decision, so it will probably take years before this particular case is settled. Meanwhile, a number of European and Asian countries, such as France, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia and Belgium, have banned its use and California has added it to its list of cancer-causing chemicals.

But what are the background and the science on this?

Round Up, with the active ingredient glyphosate, was developed and commercially released in 1974 by Monsanto, since been acquired by Bayer. Glyphosate is what's considered a broad-spectrum herbicide, meaning it kills many different types of plants. The product was marketed to farmers and homeowners as a way to increase crop output by killing weeds that could overcome

the desired crop.

One difficulty, quickly realized, was that the product also killed the desirable crop. Monsanto used agricultural biotechnology to develop crop seeds that would be resistant to glyphosate – in other words, to develop genetically modified crop seed so that Round Up could be sprayed even when seed was already planted. Monsanto cleverly named these seeds "Round Up Ready." Currently there are soy, corn, canola, alfalfa, cotton and sorghum "Round Up Ready" seeds. These seeds are patented and are developed so that the farmer cannot use the seeds from a prior year's crops for future years since the second generation of the seeds are sterile.

So now there are two issues. One is whether GMO foods are safe, and whether glyphosate is safe. Let's cover the GMO



PAT DRAY

issue first. No one knows whether changing just a single gene in a seed changes just one function. So, yes, the "Round Up Ready" soy is not killed by Round Up, but what if the change of the single gene also means that soy has nutritional changes?

The second issue of whether glyphosate is safe for animal ingestion is also an unknown. Although the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says that glyphosates are safe, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer labels them as "probably carcinogenic to humans" and linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

The Environmental Working Group, a non-profit organization, tested 45 samples of breakfast foods made from oats grown in fields where glyphosate were used and found elevated levels in 31 samples, including

those of Cheerios and Quaker Oats. Even eggs have been found to have elevated levels, since the chickens eat grains that have been exposed to glyphosates. Here again, the question is "what is a safe level" and how much bioaccumulation occurs. In the U.S., the daily allowable intake is 1.75 milligrams per kilogram of body weight. In the E.U., the daily allowable intake is 0.3 milligrams per kilogram of body weight, or around one sixth the higher allowable intake in the U.S.

With so many unknowns, it's difficult to determine what foods are "safe" to consume. The easy answer is to "go organic," buy locally, and know your farmer. If you have some pesky weeds, rather than spraying with glyphosate-containing weed killers, get some exercise by hand weeding.

Pat Dray is a past president of the Orange Garden Club.

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Here's To Your Health:

A Matter Of The Heart

February is heart health month. About 610,000 people die of heart disease in the US every year. That's one in four deaths. Heart disease is still the number one killer of both men and women. Many people think that cancer is the leading cause of death, but that is wrong.

Atherosclerosis is the most common cause of heart disease, but it is correctable by eating a healthy diet, exercising, destressing and being a nonsmoker. So why is it still the number one killer of Americans, with all the information we have at our finger tips?

In my opinion the reason is twofold. It's about community and it's about a mindset.

If we live in an active community in which

living a healthy lifestyle is the norm, chances are we will be motivated to do the same. People who walk to the market, ride their bikes to work, have places to grab a healthy bite to eat and spend time destressing are more likely to live longer lives than those who don't. A healthy lifestyle needs to be part of our culture and community. We don't not have sidewalks in the town I live in, preventing many of our children from being able to walk or ride their bikes safely to school the way I did when I was a child. The lack of sidewalks also isolates the elderly from getting out for a stroll or maybe a stop at a



MICHELE TENNEY

local coffee shop to meet up with some friends.

Our mindsets also play a tremendous role in how we approach wellness. If we don't have a mind open to change, we shut ourselves off. The facts about heart disease are known, yet we are not making the necessary changes to make healthy living a lifestyle. The battlefield is in your mind. The more you hear it, the more likely you will be to remember it, perceive it and perhaps implement it.

Your heart is a muscle too, so walking to the mailbox to get the mail doesn't exactly count for heart health. You do not need a gym to get

your heart healthy. You can jump rope, jog, do jumping jacks and plenty of other things to exercise your heart. You won't be sorry when you're feeling happy, sleeping better and feeling more energized. Meditation, prayer and destressing are essential to a healthy heart. Choose love, forgiveness and peace. Set the course of your day by choosing these things in the morning and all throughout your day.

You are important, loved and absolutely worth every bit of effort to living a long healthy life. I believe in you. You can do this. Here's to your heart.

Michele O'Brien-Tenney is a personal trainer and nutritionist. She can be reached at 203-668-2969

Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Representation Is Everything

An article in the Feb. 7 edition of the *New Haven Register* described how technology is taking over the need for realtors. It compared us to travel agents or retail shopping online.

Social media can give you the stats, the address, taxes and square footage, but that is all it can do. It does not negotiate, strategize your inspections, give lender expertise or close the deal.

Imagine if just finding a buyer was all a homeowner needed to do? It is a fact that most homes are sold – and sold for more money – using an agent. There are always trust factors, personal feelings and the old problem of estimating the right asking price. Technology also makes huge mistakes.

A home on a bad lot, with a wet basement and on a highway can appear to have the same selling value as a beautiful home where location and condition set the stage for the sale to happen.

Even getting preapproved for a mortgage online is not accurate. The buyer and the seller suffer when there is no consultation. A realtor's job is priceless. No one saves money by estimating potential costs, which is what technology does in ballparking the overall. A buyer comes to buy with an agent, and the seller has no representation because he listed with an internet company that just puts



BARBARA LEHRER

his information online. Now only one side has strategy and knows the complexity of the whole deal.

An attorney, brought in to help a "For Sale By Owner," has no clue about the property. He is only there to type addendums and do the title search. I would never demean the job of the closing attorneys, but realtors spend months coordinating the mojo: the perfect fit between buyer and seller. Realtors know how to reach the sweet spot, where fairness is defined and the bank appraiser is right on the money.

This expertise is no joke, and never

will technology be able to replace us. Professional pictures and advertising are really all technology can specialize in.

Tools like proper disclosure information and preparation of the listing give a homeowner the opportunity to shine. Keeping the buyers and sellers apart is crucial to the success of the process, from beginning to end. Realtors accept the responsibility of the business at hand.

Marketing one's home is the specialty of large real estate companies. When you are listed on thirty websites and have a strong listing agent, you are getting your money's worth on any costs you may incur.

If you need more information on these issues, email Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com.



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Lifestyle

Room 911:

What Changes Decorating Can Make In Our Lives

At times, I reflect on some of the decorating jobs I have had and which ones stand out, good or bad. After nearly 33 years in the business, here are a few that resonate with me.

When I started out in 1986, my first job was for a distant relative who wanted some help on her living and dining room areas. It went smoothly and helped build my confidence in the decorator/design area. The best endorsement was for a client to refer you to a friend, and that happened. But I was not prepared to walk into a house that reflected the mindset of someone who was a hoarder.

Well before Marie Kondo's book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, and the public's recognition that hoarding can be related to an aspect of obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression or anxiety (according to

The Mayo Clinic), I tried to single-handedly remedy the situation.

In one bedroom, I could only see a bed and barely see a floor because everything was piled high with "stuff." The same was true of the entire house. As I started to see what could be discarded, I learned very quickly that everything – and I mean everything – brought joy to this person.

This person's family and friends begged me to come up with a solution, but I knew I was out of my league. I could not change the behavior of this person, let alone come up with a decorating plan.

For the most part, my other assignments for residential and commercial projects over the



TEDRA SCHNEIDER

course of many years have been gratifying and largely uneventful. In early 2004, I received a call from a woman who said that she wanted to surprise her mother, who as a single mom, sacrificed so much so she could send her to college. Now, it was the daughter's turn to do something good for her mother.

Though the carpet was worn, the wallpaper peeling, the furniture old, the daughter insisted that we start with the bedroom. She wanted either bright paint or wallpaper, a stand for a new TV, a matching comforter set and a new dresser. It was an easy fix. I never met the mother. I later found out she was in and out of

the hospital with a serious illness.

Fast forward to five years ago. I ran into the daughter at a supermarket. She told me that at the time I was redoing her mother's room, she knew her mother did not have long to live, but she was determined to make whatever days she had left to be in an environment that gave her joy and hope. The sunny yellow walls, the new items and a bird cage (with an actual canary in it) was a gift from a daughter to a mother that will always stand out in my mind.

The effect on our environment that decorating and design can have is important, but add love and it becomes profound.

Tedra Schneider can be reached at: restagebytedra@gmail.com

Wine Talk:

"Steen" On The Rise

Recently Little Teague, the great wine writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, said, "Drink more Chenin Blanc and less Sauvignon Blanc in the new year."

Chenin Blanc has become the next great wine to be discovered by the American wine-drinking public. Originally from the Loire Valley, it has found a home in South Africa, where more Chenin Blanc is grown than anywhere else in the world. In South Africa, "steen," as they call it, is a workhorse in that it is used for blending, for topping and to soften out several white varieties. It has great versatility, being used to make every style of wine, including dessert wines, sparkling wines and dry wines. It has an intense bouquet of pear with floral notes.

The Chenin Blanc Association was formed in 2000 to promote the grape and develop a high-quality image for it. The CBA recognizes six different styles of Chenin Blanc. Labeling regulations have not yet been decided upon, but there are four major

categories agreed upon by the majority of producers. They are fresh and fruity, oaked, blends and sweet wines.

Fresh and fruity is fermented in stainless steel and is a bright fruit-forward wine with strong aromas. These wines have tastes and smells of apple, pear, plumb, melon and lots of tropical fruit. They are a great alternative to un-oaked, cold-weather Chardonnay.

The oaked category is relatively new. Many winemakers in South Africa are doing a secondary fermentation like California Chardonnay. If you like buttery oaked Chardonnay, you will love this style of Chenin Blanc. It has the vanilla from the oak, but it exhibits a nuttier or woodier flavor and lots of sweet spice.

The blended style is great for Chenin Blanc. It is high in acid, so it lends some zip to other varieties. The fruit varies



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

depending on where it is grown, but there is a Chenin Blanc-Chardonnay-Viognier blend that I think is great. There are several other combinations that you can find, including one with only Chardonnay, that are also worthwhile.

The sweet or desert wine takes a long time to develop due to the high sugar content. It is usually oaked, so it has vanilla and nutty characteristics. But it also includes layers and layers of flavors such as ginger, cinnamon and cloves. It is generally not released for at least five years. You will find some that are 10 or 15 years old. You'll have to pay between \$25 and \$50 for a half bottle, but it is a treat. Most of these styles age well, especially the oak and sweet styles. This is because it is high in acid and has a low pH – unusual for a white wine.

Chenin Blanc is versatile, with many

styles. It has wonderful fruit flavors, depending on what part of Africa it is grown in and what the soil characteristics there are. It reminds me of Savignon Blanc from New Zealand five or six years ago. No one had heard of it or had tried it, and now it is on every restaurant's wine list. Get ahead of the curve and try some "steen," Watch the mouths of your friends and family drop open when they taste this wonderful wine variety.

Ray Spaziani is the Chapter Director of the New Haven Chapter of the American Wine Society. He teaches wine appreciation classes at Gateway Community College and for the Milford Board of Education Adult Ed Program, and is a member of the International Tasting Panel of Amenti Del Vino and Wine Maker Magazine. He is an award-winning home wine maker. Email Ray with your wine questions and wine events at Realestatepro1000@gmail.com

Around Milford

Milford Government Access Television Vital

Milford Government Access Television, or MGAT, contains video of meetings of city boards and commissions. The Cable Act of 1984 required cable holders to designate some channels for the purposes of public, educational and governmental programming in recognition of the right of way access that cities and towns provided for cable installation. In addition, a certain amount of funding obtained through cable subscriber fees must be distributed to municipalities for public access television.

Historically, Milford and Orange had to fight to gain town-specific programming in order to better serve their communities. It is a tribute to our community leaders, elected state legislators and local officials who participated effectively in the successful fight for more local control of government access cable. The outcome of improved government access programming was obtained through a lengthy challenge via the

regulatory process and eventually through the courts.

The advisory councils were established with Milford and Orange joining the communities of Fairfield and Woodbridge as part of Area Two Cable Advisory Council. Each municipality has representation on the council, with the aim of promoting quality community access television. These advisory councils function to receive, distribute and account for grant funding provided to local municipalities to enhance their educational and government programming.

The councils, through the representatives, provide a vision for participating towns to provide quality PEG programming toward the goal of providing transparency in government.

The goal of the Cable Act of 1984 was to contribute to an informed public that would be better prepared regarding



ELLEN RUSSELL BEATTY

issues important to where residents live, work and vote. To this important end, both Orange Government Access Television and MGAT serve us well.

Kara Flannery, the current chairperson of the board of MGAT, is optimistic about future plans for expansion of services, new equipment and working with an energetic team of committee members. Arney Rogoff and Flannery are responsible for bringing the YouTube channel project to completion so that anyone with an internet connection has access to previously recorded meetings. The YouTube channel supplements the live governmental and educational meetings on cable channels 78 and 79. Flannery says that OGAT has been a model of effective programming and management. Strong leadership from the beginning through to the current leadership of Sol Silverstein is an important factor in OGAT's success.

The Milford Board of Alderman, Board of

Education and Planning and Zoning meetings are broadcast via MGAT along with Board of Finance budget hearings. Plans for the future include expanding the scope and variety of programming. MGAT has made significant strides and now provides some live video streaming services. Grant monies have provided funding for the recent purchase of new camera equipment that will make such services easier to deliver. The City of Milford provides financing in support of MGAT as a vital service to residents and an enhancement to the community.

Dr. Ellen Russell Beatty holds the rank of Professor Emerita in Public Health-and Nursing from Southern Connecticut State University. She is currently serving in her second term on the Board of Alders in Milford where she resides with her spouse, Edward. Ellen has an extensive background in health care, higher education, organizational management and strategic planning. Dr. Beatty writes frequently on related topics and welcomes comments from readers at Ellenbeatty@gmail.com.

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Your Health

Opioid Crisis Hits Connecticut

By Jehanzeb Kayani & Amir Mohammad

The opioid crisis is an ongoing public health epidemic that has evolved over the past few decades and resulted in an increasing number of opioid related overdose deaths across the nation.

The birth of this epidemic can be linked to numerous factors, but chief among them is the increase use of prescription and non-prescription opioid drugs.

In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies made efforts to convince medical community of the non-addictive nature of prescription opioids, thus fueling an increase in opioid prescription rates.

The early 2000s was marked by a rise in the prescription opioid overdose deaths that stemmed from rising rates in the prescription of opioids, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

In 2010, we began to see changes in the distribution of opioid related overdose deaths as a rise in heroin associated overdose

fatalities occurred. In the mid-2010s, we found an increase in overdose deaths involving the use of synthetic opioids, most notably fentanyl.

Today, the CDC estimates approximately 130 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

In the state of Connecticut, we have seen stark increase in the rates of opioid-related overdoses and deaths. Up until 2012, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health, showed rates of opioid-related overdose deaths in the state mirrored the national average.

Between 2012 and 2017, the total number of overdose deaths among Connecticut residents rose from 357 to 1,038 deaths, according to the CDC.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health counted two deaths in Orange due to



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

opioid overdoses between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2017.

To combat this opioid epidemic, it is important that you recognize early signs of opioid abuse among friends, family members, and loved ones by recognizing three components of addiction known as “the three C’s”: control, craving and consequences.

Loss of control can manifest in people presenting with withdrawal symptoms when they do things like calling their providers and pharmacies for early refills or seeking opioids from other sources.

Craving can be seen in those asking for stronger doses and complaining of greater pain without any change in their medical conditions.

Ongoing use of opioids despite negative consequences like over-sedation and decreased social interactions and activities is

a third red flag.

To prevent illicit use of opioids, the Mayo clinic recommends you dispose of any leftover prescription opioids by giving these unused meds at prescription drug take-back events, bringing them to the prescription drug disposal centers at local pharmacies, or collection receptacles within your local community.

Dr. Amir Mohammad is a practicing internist and preventive medicine physician. He greatly enjoys teaching and doing public health work. He is serving as the Director of Health for the Town of Orange. Zeb Kayani is a lifelong resident and a graduate of Amity Regional High School, Class of 2012. He graduated from UConn in 2016 and Columbia University in 2018 with a master's in public health in epidemiology and is an aspiring physician and public health advocate.

Tax Exemption For Veterans continued from page 1

Selectman Paul Davis said he thought the ordinance struck the right balance.

“It would be a pleasure for all of us to say, ‘Let’s give the maximum to everyone we can,’” he said. “I think what we have here is a proposal that is one in which the town is recognizing the limits of our ability but also the understanding that we do have the capability of maybe paying a little bit more than other communities.”

Indeed, Orange has been on the forefront of giving breaks to veterans. It was the first town in Connecticut in 2004 to raise its local tax exemption to qualifying veterans from \$10,000 to \$20,000 after the state made the change possible. It has regularly raised the income limits in accordance with what the state has allowed.

“The Board of Selectman has acted on this in full support each time,” Zeoli said.

Selectman Mitch Goldblatt, who had voiced reservations about the cost of the exemption at the board’s Jan. 9 meeting, voiced his wholehearted support for the ordinance.

“I think the way that attorney (Vincent) Marino has explained his methodology for coming up with the numbers in this ordinance, which meet with the state statute that’s been passed are certainly acceptable, and I certainly hope that we will pass this

tonight as written,” he said.

Selectman Ralph Okenquist was the only abstention from the vote. He cited the fact that he is a veteran and might become eligible for the benefit.

The new income limit becomes effective Oct. 1. To claim eligibility, residents must submit an application and income verification to the town assessor.

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Youth & Education

Amity Middle School Students Finalists In Geography Bee



Ten students from Amity Middle School in Orange are finalists in the National Geographic GeoBee. Front row, from left: Andie Napolitano, Michael Kwolek, school champion Matthew McLeod, Simran Jain and Rocco Izzo. Back row, from left: Ryan Burns, Edward Han, Aditi Bhattamishra, Bowen Tullo and Eric Wang. Photo by Jennifer Marganski.

Orange Soccer Association Registration Open

Registration is open for the Orange Soccer Association's spring season until Wednesday, March 31.

Boys and girls ages 4 through 12 who are Orange residents are eligible to participate. Games will be Sundays from April 28 to June 23. The games are at Mary L Tracy School for those ages 4 to 9, and at Fred P. Wolfe Park for those ages 10 to 12. There is an \$80 early-bird discount fee per player until March 31, and a \$10 discount fee applied at checkout.

There will be girls' and boys' divisions in the following age groups depending on registration numbers: boys' first and second grade play from 1:15 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.; girls' first and second grade play from 2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.; boys' third and fourth grade

play from 3:45 p.m. to 5 p.m.; girls' third and fourth grade play from 2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.; and co-ed teams for fifth, sixth and seventh grades play from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Register at orange.cjsalive.org. At the time of registration please have available a pediatrician's name and phone number and insurance carrier/ID number/group number. You must receive a confirmation email to know that you have completed the process.

OSA coaches must register as an in-house coach on the website. Direct all inquiries to Janet Lyngdal at orangesoccerct@gmail.com or Tom Pisano at tompisanotrane@gmail.com, or call 203-877-2058. All registrations are online. There will be assistance for those looking to sign up Saturday, March 16 from 9 a.m. to noon at Mary L Tracy School.

HCC Announces Pick For One Book, One College

Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport announced Jan. 23 that its pick for the third annual HCC One Book, One College program will be *Never Look An American In the Eye: A Memoir of Flying Turtles, Colonial Ghosts, and the Making of a Nigerian American* by Okey Ndibe.

"We are very happy to welcome Okey Ndibe to campus for our third annual One Book, One College event," said HCC Librarian Jennifer Lutris. "We're looking forward to incorporating his book into our classrooms, and welcoming members of the local community to our exciting programming."

Ndibe earned a MFA and PhD from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and has since taught at numerous colleges across Massachusetts and Connecticut. His opinion pieces have been published by numerous publications, including *The New York Times*, BBC online, Al Jazeera online, the *Financial Times*, *Fabian Society Journal*, and the (Nigerian) *Daily Sun*, where his widely syndicated weekly column appears.

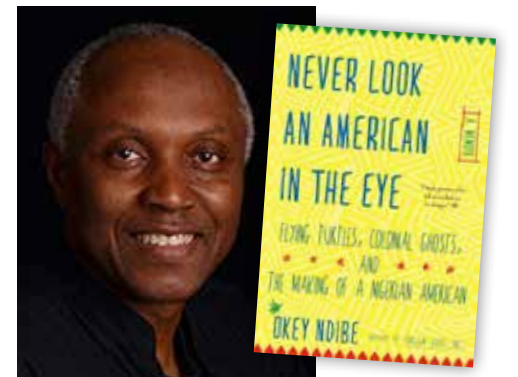
Never Look An American In the Eye details Ndibe's move from Nigeria to America, where he wrote for the iconic African Commentary magazine. The book chronicles his transition into becoming an African-American, his relationships with his fellow writers including the legendary Chinua Achebe, and how he settled into American life.

"This book is very fitting for our time, when the topic of immigration is at the forefront of American politics," said HCC President Paul Broadie. "It also connects

deeply to the makeup of Housatonic's student body, which has a significant number of first-generation students and immigrants themselves. We're thrilled to encourage college-wide conversation, creativity, and community through this program."

Leading up to a book signing and lecture by Ndibe on Thursday, March 28, HCC will offer a Book A Day Giveaway, in which the school will hold a drawing for one book each day prior to the date of the event. All are welcome to enter by visiting the HCC library, located at 900 Lafayette Blvd. in Bridgeport.

"We are especially excited that this year's project features Connecticut author and 2017 Connecticut Book Award winner for nonfiction Okey Ndibe," said Dr. Jason R. Mancini, executive director of Connecticut Humanities, is supporting the program with a grant.



Connecticut author Okey Ndibe will speak at Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport on March 28 as part of the college's One Book, One College program. Photo courtesy of HCC.

Milford Accepting Youth Award Nominations

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake, in conjunction with Milford Youth and Family Services, will present the 31st Annual Mayor's Youth Award in a ceremony scheduled on Tuesday, April 30 at 5 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Milford.

Each year, the mayor and Milford Youth and Family Services recognize youth that have performed outstanding service to improve Milford or to assist its residents. Teachers, parents and others in the community nominate youth for this award.

Nominees are considered for individual awards in three age-based categories: elementary, middle, and high school. In addition, there is a fourth category to honor the accomplishments of youth groups.

Nomination forms can be obtained from Milford Youth and Family Services at 150 Gulf St. in Milford, the Mayor's office, or from the City of Milford Youth and Family Services website at ci.milford.ct.us/youth-family-services/pages/mayors-youth-award.

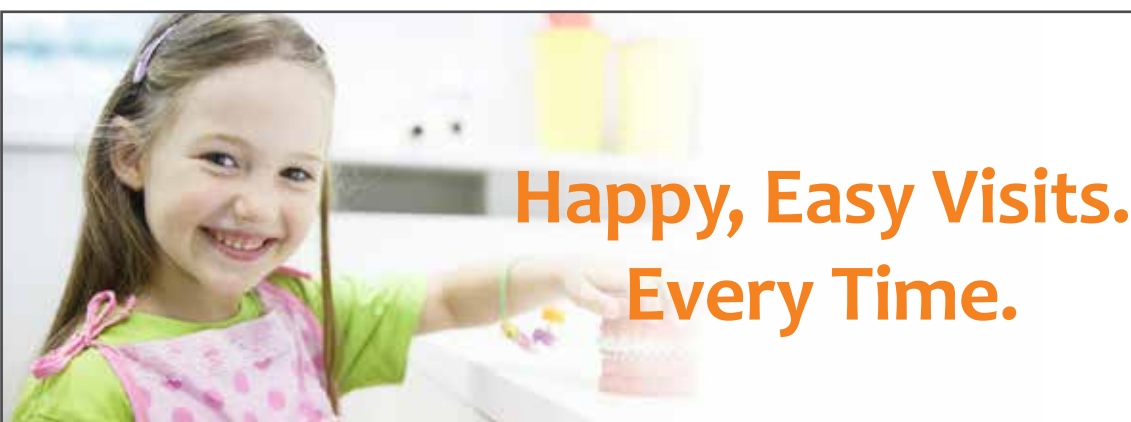
The nomination deadline is Friday, Mar. 15.

Questions may be directed to Lesley Darling in the Department of Human Services at 203-783-3253 or by email at ldarling@ci.milford.ct.us.

AMSO Interprets Picasso



Amity Middle School students in Orange recently had the opportunity to paint their own interpretation of one of Pablo Picasso's masterpieces. The activity was funded by a grant awarded to AMSO teacher Eleanor Stephens by the Jamie A. Hulley Arts Foundation. Students will continue to study Picasso and how his work is related to other disciplines, learning about cubism and how Picasso's work reflected events happening in the world. Students will also write poetry based on their artwork. From left: AMSO students Nico Young, Fred Hulley and Carson Lee. Photo by Eleanor Stephens.



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Business

The Milford Chamber of Commerce

Communicating The Chamber's Value

I am honored to join the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce as executive director. I have admired the bold, strategic work done by this organization on behalf of our businesses and community and am thrilled to be here.



PAM STANESKI

As I join the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce and work with its members and our team to shape its vision, our work will be informed and defined by the challenges and opportunities facing our local businesses and the community where they do their work.

Communicating the value of our chamber to its members, prospective members, government officials and the media takes effort. Gone are the days when members joined just to join. Our vision is that the chamber will be a convener of people – businesses, non-profit organizations, representatives of government and education. We want a place where they come to network, to learn, to teach, and to grow our vibrant community.

There are many parts to communicating value to our members, but one of the most important is listening. How can we communicate value to our members if we don't know what they value?

To this end, we want to know what keeps our members up at night. We know that one size does not fit all and are willing to work on the resources and solutions that address the interests and needs of the various sectors of our membership from economic development, influencing a business-friendly environment, developing a skilled workforce, providing support to grow new enterprises and creating network opportunities.

At the end of the day it is important for us to remember that we as staff members do not make the organization but are the keepers of the organization. I look forward to listening and working on behalf of our members and community in this challenging new role and utilizing this regular spot to tell the chamber's story.

Thinking about joining the chamber? Give us a call at 203-878-0681.



The Orange Chamber of Commerce

Orange Chamber Growing

2018 turned out to be a great year for the Orange Chamber of Commerce. The chamber gained over 30 new members.



CAROL SMULLEN


Those new members included: Beyond; BarCode Bar & Restaurant; Aiping Tai Chi Center; ADP; Escape Rooms CT; International Vein Clinics; Orange Children's Dentistry; Liz Lyon Photography; Christmas Tree Shops & That!; The Dermatology Group; TrinityPoint Wealth; New York Life; Michaels Jewelers; Robinson Technology Solutions; Webster Bank; Urban Air Adventure Park; Fireside Grill; Nikos Ice Cream; Patriot Bank; Amity Home Care; Miracle-Ear Center; Rubino Family Chiropractic; Taylor Rental; West Shore Associates; De Young Media; Pizazz Salon & Boutique; TGI Friday's; Noodle House LLC; Reliable Dental; Adecco; Shift Design Marketing and M Beauty Studio. These new members realized the value of belonging to the largest network of small and large businesses in Orange.

The chamber, looking to remain relevant and increase the benefits of membership, launched a redesigned, user-friendly website. Members control their listing, adding photos, logos and information to enhance their presence. The site includes a business and community calendar where you can find events and activities from community not-for-profit organizations as well as chamber business partners. It's available at orangectchamber.com.

The Orange Chamber of Commerce also kicked off its "Morning Jolt" coffee and conversation events for area businesses,


hosted at Eli's Orange. Join us for great coffee and conversation, meet other business members, share information and grow your business. Morning Jolt takes place at 8:15 a.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 285 Boston Post Rd. This is an opportunity to talk about your business with like-minded professionals, expand your circle of influence and have a cup of coffee. The program is free. All you need to do is email your reservation to director@orangectchamber.com.

The WOW Women's network of Orange and West Haven Chamber business women has scheduled its annual Leadership Conference for Tuesday, April 2 at the Italian American Club in West Haven. Tickets are \$20 and you can sponsor a student for \$10. All include a continental breakfast. Four scholarships are awarded to female high school seniors who will be going on to college or other advanced studies. This year's program speakers include Monique Bolt, director of events and undergraduate admissions at the University of New Haven; Jennifer Heath, president and CEO of United Way of Greater New Haven; and Sara Longobardi, senior vice president of retail banking at People's United Bank. More information and registration can be found at bit.ly/WLC-2019.








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Planning Ahead

Spending Your Tax Refund

The average tax refund check last year was \$2,825 according to the IRS, and some analysts predict that figure will jump by 25 percent this year thanks to tax reform measures, most of which took effect Jan. 1, 2018.

Since 70 percent of U.S. tax filers receive a refund every year, that will amount to a nice chunk of change for many people, possibly averaging \$3,531. What should you do with it?

The first thing to do is to adjust your withholding. This is not "found money" the federal government has decided to gift to you. Your refund represents the amount that you overpaid in taxes during the year. People tend to lose sight of the fact that the government collects its tax revenue directly from their paychecks throughout the year rather than all at once. When you get a tax refund, that's just the government handing you back money that you effectively loaned it at no interest. It's better to adjust your tax profile – deductions, withholding, and so forth – so that you come out owing no

taxes and having no refund owed to you.

If you are due a refund this year, however, you really should think of it as savings. A good financial advisor will tell you that one of the best things you can do with your refund check is to deposit it in your savings account, especially if you don't have an adequate emergency fund (enough to pay three to six months of household expenses).

Another positive way to use the funds from a financial planning perspective would be to pay down debt if you have any. Start with high-interest credit card debt, which can be a huge drag on your future retirement savings. Or you can apply it against your mortgage, which will save you interest down the road.

Beyond that, look to your financial plan. (You do have one, right?) Consider your long-term goals and look for ways to apply



ERIC TASHLEIN

your refund money to them. For instance, one goal might be to fund an Individual Retirement Account every year. If you didn't fulfill that goal last year, now you have a second chance.

Along those lines, consider investing the money in mutual funds or ETFs. You can add to an existing investment account or start one if you haven't taken this step yet. Make the money work for your future by investing it for the long term.

Another idea is to make repairs or improvements/additions to your home. That's something you can enjoy right away that also works for your future by increasing the value of your house.

There are many other ideas, from investing in personal growth to donating to a favorite charity. And, of course, it's okay if you decide to use that money to pay for

a great vacation or something else fun or frivolous. It's your money. Just make sure you give it some thought.

Eric Tashlein is a Certified Financial Planner professional™ and founding Principal of Connecticut Capital Management Group, LLC, 2 Schooner Lane, Suite 1-12, in Milford. He can be reached at 203-877-1520 or through connecticutcapital.com. This is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as personalized investment advice or legal/tax advice. Please consult your advisor/attorney/tax advisor. Registered Representative, Securities offered through Cambridge Investment Research, Inc., a Broker/Dealer, Member FINRA/SIPC. Investment Advisor Representative, Cambridge Investment Research Advisors, Inc., A Registered Investment Advisor. Cambridge Investment Research Inc., and Connecticut Capital Management Group, LLC are not affiliated.

Program Gives Milford Caregivers A Break

The Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut has announced a new program designed for Milford family caregivers to provide a respite break for caregivers. Through funding provided by the Milford Community Block Development, a small group of Milford residents will be able to receive the services of a senior companion to provide friendly visiting and supervision for a Milford resident who receives help to live at home from family members.

Senior companions are not homemakers or home-health aides. They do not provide

hands-on services. Their purpose is to provide companionship.

The senior companion program has been operating in the south-central region for more than 30 years and has enabled thousands of families to keep their loved ones at home. Some families utilize the service once a week for a few hours; others use it daily. A schedule is developed with each family that suits that family's needs.

Not every match is a perfect fit. Sometimes more than one pairing is tried. The supervisor of the companions works with the family

to ensure the match is working well. The companions all complete a training program at the Agency on Aging and are fully vetted with criminal and financial background checks and references.

The Agency on Aging says it recognizes the value of family caregivers in giving older adults the ability to remain living in the community, and that it appreciates the sacrifices family members make to provide ongoing help to their loved ones. This program can provide a few hours when a caregiver can get away from their

responsibilities and take a break, knowing a competent person will be with their relative.

There is no charge for the program. Eligibility is restricted to Milford residents. Priority is given to individuals with the greatest need. It's a new, small program that may be expanded in the future if the need is demonstrated.

Those interested in applying for the program should contact Beverly Kidder at the Agency on Aging at 203-785-8533 or email bkidder@aoascc.org.

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How To Navigate Your Health Insurance Plan

The Affordable Care Act mandates that annual “well health” visits and certain health screenings be covered by insurance with no copays and not be subject to a deductible. While this is a great benefit for many, there are some specifics written into the regulations about which folks should be aware. Also, insurance companies are now offering member engagement especially to those enrolled in senior insurance plans.



TRISH PEARSON

Here’s how to avoid some of the hidden pitfalls in health insurance benefits:

- **Well health visits:** In Connecticut (and many other states) a well health visit is covered under any insurance plan. Short-term medical plans are excluded from this requirement. This type of visit is interpreted

by most as another term for a “physical.” However, it can also include a woman’s annual visit to the gynecologist. The well health visit code that the doctor submits to the insurance company can only be used once per 12-month period. Any other doctor therefore must use a different code specific to their area of medicine so that the claim is not denied. In order to avoid this situation, tell your provider if you have already had a “well visit” to your primary care physician or other doctor so they submit the claim correctly. It will save money and time.

- **Screenings:** Health screenings for certain diseases such as mammograms, colonoscopies and blood work are also covered by health insurance plans. However, they are only

covered if they are considered screenings – meaning there are no symptoms and it is an annual test. If the test is to diagnose a condition, then it is subject to a copay and/or deductible. In some cases, such as a colonoscopy, it is considered an outpatient procedure and falls under that cost-sharing category.

- **Member outreach:** Many insurance companies are offering area member meetings for their senior (Medicare) population. The purpose is to inform members about benefits and to hear their concerns. It is worth it to attend these events if you have questions or concerns about coverage or policies such as pre-authorizations, referrals, prescription drug costs, or if you have a customer service issue.

- **State Medical Assistance:** State medical insurance is on the state budget agenda again. The programs that provide assistance to seniors for Medicare Part B premium and help

with medical and prescription expenses will be considered for renewal as of July 1. If you are receiving benefits under these programs or know someone who is, contact your state legislators to let them know how important the program is. Last year they attempted to cut the income levels for this program dramatically, which caused great concern about the potential financial hardship that would result. Act now to avoid a big problem in the summer. Many elected officials are unaware of how many of their constituents depend on this program.

As with any contract, there are details hidden in the fine print. To get help, contact your provider, insurance agent or member services.

Trish Pearson is a licensed independent insurance agent and certified long term care specialist. Contact her at 203-640-5969 or trishpearson281@gmail.com.

Retired and Rejuvenated:

The Old Piano Blues

Many of us remember growing up when a significant number of parents felt it was important to have a piano in the house for their children to take lessons. I never had a piano or lessons as a youngster (my parents gave me dancing lessons instead). But when we had our own child, we bought a piano. Actually, the piano was a gift from my father, who left a small inheritance upon his death. He loved good music, and my husband and I felt it would be a tribute to him to buy a piano with the money for our 5-year-old daughter.



JOANNE BYRNE

We still have that piano and our daughter is now a thirty-something. I took lessons on that piano along with our daughter. She progressed quickly. I never got out of my first book. When tuners would visit, they would end their work by playing a little Chopin or Bach, no doubt a calculated reminder of what a glorious musical instrument it was, but a fact not revealed by my playing. Our daughter was much better.

Many years later our daughter went off to

college and the piano remained in our living room, mostly as a beautiful piece of furniture on which to display family photos. By the time our daughter graduated from college, was established in her own condo and progressing in her own career, the piano was moved to her place.

It remained there for several years, until she was selected for a working fellowship in Europe. She decided it was time to say goodbye to this too-silent, 400-pound friend. It was a tough decision: after all, this piano was a gift from my father, her grandfather, and served us well for many years of lessons and recitals.

We figured that finding a new home for a beautiful Baldwin would be easy and provide some solace. How wrong we were. We joined the legions of Americans singing the old piano blues. Pianos may have a substantial amount of emotional value to their owners, but not much meaningful value on the open market.

For much of the twentieth century, most self-respecting homes in America had a

piano. It was the entertainment system long before the era of electronics. Families would play and sing together or listen to their children’s recitals. The peak year for piano sales was 1909, when Americans bought 364,500 new models. Sales stayed high until the Depression and World War II. By the late 1940s arrived, though piano sales rebounded, remaining strong and steady for the next 30 years.

Then a slow downward sales arpeggio started. In the late 1970s, baby boomers stopped buying pianos. Used pianos flooded the market.

We discovered that no one wanted our Baldwin for any price, including free. Reasons included oversupply, less interest in them as a home furnishing, and the availability of inexpensive, realistic, digital pianos.

But like many a blues song, this piano riff ends with hope. We decided to move the piano back

to our house. I began piano lessons again at age 70. Learning to play the piano again after almost 30 years was like learning a new language (Chinese or Russian at that). But we all know how important it is to stretch our brains (and our fingers) as we age. Learning new skills is good for us.

I’m still at it. I have my weekly lesson from a very patient teacher, and I practice, practice, practice. I have more time now, so maybe this time I’ll progress to book five. Let us continue to cherish the music.

Joanne Byrne served as Senior Services Coordinator for the Town of Orange. She is now actively and happily retired. Email her at joannebyrne41@gmail.com to share your thoughts on retirement.

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News & Events

Friends Of The Milford Library Get New Leadership



The Friends of the Milford Library voted in new officers, president Pam Pilla and vice-president of membership Margaret Downey at their Jan. 27 annual meeting held at the library. Photo by Anne Bolin.

The Friends of the Milford Library held their annual meeting and thank you party Jan. 27 in the program room of the Milford Public Library. The room was filled with approximately 50 members in attendance.

FOML voted in new leadership, including president Pam Pilla and vice-president of membership Margaret Downey. Both will serve two-year terms. Ashley Volkens was introduced as the chair of the October 2019 Party in the Stacks. The theme of the event will be "Party in the Stacks Goes Hot Pop Culture."

Outgoing president Anne Bolin presented an award to Linda Sheehan, committee chair of the First Friday with Friends program, for going above and beyond in her service to the organization over many years.

Bolin also presented an award to Deanna

Jacobs for her many volunteer hours with Party in the Stacks over the last three years and for hosting the FOML on a tour of Beardsley Zoo.

Outgoing vice president of membership Amy Bringardner presented the Community Supporter award to Rich Meyers of Sterling Printing & Graphics, who was not able to attend the meeting. Meyers and his company have helped FOML with printing of mugs, tote bags and banners for many initiatives. He was also a sponsor for the 2018 Party in the Stacks.

A large chocolate cake on a side table with the coffee featured the words "Thank You" in recognition of the outgoing leaders.

To become a member of the Friends of Milford Library, go to the Milford Public Library site and sign up.

Changing Of The Guard For Orange CERT



Kenneth Lyke, Jr., left, was sworn in as the new team leader for the Orange Community Response Team, or CERT, Jan. 16 at High Plains Community Center in Orange. Allen Mushin, right, was honored for his 11 years as team leader. He will now assume the role of executive consultant. CERT is made up of community volunteers who are trained in disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. The training enables them to assist in basic disaster response operations. Photo by Judith Toohey.

Milford-Based TrinityPoint Expands Team

TrinityPoint Wealth recently announced the addition of two new client associates, bringing the total number of employees in its Milford office to 11.

Jennifer Tavella brings over 18 years of experience in financial services, client relationship management and operations. She said she is excited to join the team in providing the ultimate client experience to

TPW clients.

Christopher J. Macca, a recent graduate from Trinity College, joined TPW in December, and has already provided invaluable support for the private client and retirement plan operational teams, TPW said in a release.

TPW is located at 612 Wheelers Farms Rd. in Milford.

Planet Fitness Behind Construction At Orange's Home Depot Plaza

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Planet Fitness is behind the construction a few blocks down from its current location on the Boston Post Road in Orange.

A demolition-only permit listing Planet Fitness as the owner/tenant was issued to West-Hartford-based Haz-Pros on Dec. 21 for remodeling work in a currently-unoccupied building at 440 Boston Post Rd. in the Home Depot Plaza.

That demolition has been completed. A building permit was subsequently issued

Jan. 22 to John Ranous of National Permits for the same location, describing the work on the space as a "remodel of interior of fitness center" with "new finishes, fixtures, partitions, some mechanical, lighting and plumbing updates."

If Planet Fitness was to move, it would not change members' commute to the gym much; the current location at 400 Boston Post Rd. is less than half a mile away.

Planet Fitness would not comment on the project.

Orange Garden Club Garners National Grant

The Garden Club of Orange was awarded a \$500 "Plant America" grant from the National Garden Club's Community Project that will allow it to purchase a bench for the Stone-Otis House garden in Orange.


Beginning in 2017, the Garden Club of Orange collaborated with the Orange Historical Society to restore the herb garden at the Stone-Otis House. Using an original description of the garden provided by the Historical Society, the club cleared years of debris and added donated compost to improve the soil.

Under the leadership of Maryellen Bispuda, club members planted 31 types of herbs. They were divided into four

quadrants – two of culinary herbs, one of beverage herbs and one of medicinal herbs. Historically correct plant markers were purchased with partial reimbursement from a grant from the Orange Lions Club. The Town of Orange donated mulch and assisted with its placement.

The National Garden Club grant will be used to purchase and install a historically accurate bench so that all members of the community can enjoy the sensory experience of the garden. The application for the grant was submitted by Pat Dray and Maryellen Bispuda.

For Garden Club of Orange membership information, contact Joanne Friedrichs at 203-7954266.

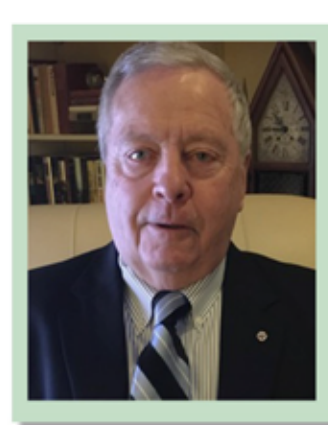


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AlfaroFamily2001@gmail.com for reservations.



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News & Events

Orange Lions Club Hosting Wine Tasting

The Orange Lions Club is hosting its annual spring wine tasting on Friday, March 22 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at St. Barbara's Church Hall at 480 Racebrook Rd. in Orange. The tasting will be facilitated by the Wine and Liquor Outlet of Orange.

The tasting will feature a large selection of wines, boutique beers and some specialty liquors. The event will also feature a large cheese table, appetizers and desserts. As always, a raffle of baskets will take place during the evening.

All proceeds will benefit Lions Club local and national charities. Additionally, the club supports Fidelco Guide Dogs and Low

Vision Centers. The club awards community grants to worthy groups and individuals, such as the Orange Historical Society, Senior Center, Case Memorial Library, Youth Services and the Volunteer Fire Department. It also serves an annual Thanksgiving dinner to local seniors, does vision screenings for young children in Orange, and provides scholarships to qualified Amity seniors.

Tickets are available from any Orange Lion Club member, at The Wine and Liquor Outlet, by calling 203-795-3906 or 203-795-0134, or by visiting orangelionswinetasting.brownpapertickets.com/.

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange is holding "A Taste of Greece" Saturday, March 2. This one-day food festival, held in the social hall of the Byzantine-style church, offers a sampling of well-known dishes and desserts.

This is a special year for the event, as the Greek Orthodox community is celebrating its hundredth anniversary.

A Taste of Greece includes classic Greek cuisine, such as avgolemeno soup (egg lemon), Greek salad, spanakopita (spinach pie), tiropita (cheese pie), gyro, pork souvlaki, lamb dinner, pastitsio (Greek-style lasagna), moussaka (layered eggplant and ground beef) and Greek-style roasted chicken. It will also feature Greek pastries,

including baklava (layers of nuts and filo drenched in syrup), kourabiedes (shortbread dusted with powdered sugar), ekmek kataifi (shredded filo topped with custard, sweet cream and almonds), koulourakia (braided cookie with sesame seeds), revani (moist almond and honey cake) and rice pudding. Wine and beer will be available.

Patrons can dine in the social hall or take food and pastries to go for another Greek meal.

The event runs from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission and on-site parking are free. St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church is located at 480 Racebrook Rd. in Orange. For more information, call 203-795-1347 or visit saintbarbara.org.

Orange Resident Featured At State Flower And Garden Show

Larry Huzi, a member of the Garden Club of Orange, will be featured in the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut's Standard Flower Show that is part of the 38th Connecticut Flower & Garden Show in late February.

The event includes more than 12,000 square feet of design and horticulture competition and over 500 entries from across the state. This year's theme is "April in Paris." The show takes place at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford from Feb. 22 to 24.

In addition to creating a floral pedestal design and a floral floor design, Huzi will conduct a workshop and demonstration on Friday, Feb. 23 titled "Spring Pops" featuring a spring creative design.

For more information regarding the show, contact Patricia Dray at 203-285-0404. The Garden Club of Orange is a member of FGCCT, NEGC and NGC. For membership information, contact Joanne Friedrichs at 203-795-4266.

Orange's Congregation Or Shalom Events

Coffee and Learn with the Rabbi Wainhaus: Every Wednesday, Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus teaches an hour-long class focusing on the ancient texts of Jewish heritage and the light they shed on current issues. The class begins at 11 a.m. and ends at noon. All are Welcome. Call the synagogue office to confirm the schedule.

A Night of "Magic & Mentalism": On Saturday, April 6. Doors open 8 p.m., and the show runs from 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$36 per person. Bring your own drinks! Wine and champagne need a kosher label. Light snacks will be provided. Call the office for tickets.

Zumba Gold: On Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. Zumba Gold is an easy-to-follow dance movement program that incorporates music from every decade to create an upbeat and fun exercise class. No experience needed. Classes are on a drop-in basis. Contact Robin at zumbarobin@gmail.com or call 203-314-8176 or the temple office.

Congregation Or Shalom is located at 205 Old Grassy Hill Rd. in Orange. Contact the office at 203-799-2341 or visit online at orshalomct.org.

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Obituaries

Full obituaries and pictures (if provided) of the deceased are on our website at www.theorangetimes.com and are published at no cost to residents of Milford and Orange.

Marjorie C. Gordon, of Orange, CT, died on Wednesday, December 12, 2018 after a courageous battle with terminal cancer. Marjorie will be lovingly remembered by her husband of 41 years, Dr. Alan M. Gordon, their children, Abraham and Daniela, and granddaughter, Letten. Those who so desire may make donations in memory of Marjorie to the Anne Moore Breast Cancer Research Fund at Weil Cornell Medical Center. To share a memory or condolence, please email dgordon28@gmail.com.

Jane Almeida, 97, of Milford, the entered into eternal rest on February 8, 2019.

Charles J. "CJ" Bradley 34, of Orange passed away on February 5, 2019

Paulette R. Ellison-Manalis, age 57, of Milford, CT, passed away peacefully on February 10, 2019.

Sarah Alexis Foster was abruptly taken from all those who knew and loved her on February 15th.

Amelia J. (Millie) Gombrewicz, 98, of Milford, passed away peacefully on February 5, 2019.

Chune Jea Lee, age 87 of Orange, died peacefully, on January 9, 2019

Edward Joseph Leheny, age 90 of Milford, CT, passed away February 6, 2019.

Deborah Torreso Lumley, age 70 of Orange, passed away on February 12, 2019.

Patrizia Moccia of Orange, passed away on Sunday, January 27, 2019.

Galen William Pape, 87 years old, previously of Milford, CT and Huntington Beach, CA, died January 3, 2019.

Barbara Jean Howe Patrick, 80, of Milford, passed away peacefully on February 15, 2019.

Anthony "Tony" John Pinto, Jr. passed, on February 1, 2019.

Frank Rakoczy, age 91, of Milford, entered peaceful rest on February 11, 2019.

Richard P. Sweedler, Sr., 72, of Milford, passed away on February 5, 2019.

Catharine Crowell Trueman, age 95 of Milford, passed away peacefully on February 13th.

Michael Walsh, age 73 of Milford, passed away February 9, 2019.

Rachel T. White-Reilly, age 60 of Milford, died Feb. 5, 2019.

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